



SOUTHEAST IDAHO

BANNOCK, BEAR LAKE, BINGHAM, CARIBOU, FRANKLIN, ONEIDA, & POWER COUNTIES

EMPLOYMENT TRENDS

The Pocatello Metropolitan Statistical Area's seasonally adjusted unemployment rate continued its downward trend and fell to 4.1 percent in April 2004 from 4.3 percent in March 2004. Spring activity in agriculture, lawn and landscaping services, trucking and retail trade drove unemployment down 5.1 percent in April 2004. From 2003 the area's unemployment rate fell 1.1 percentage points, a drop from 5.2 percent in April 2003 to the current rate of 4.1 percent. While the area's *Civilian Labor Force* remained fairly constant, the number of unemployed individuals fell 21.3 percent from 2,110 in April 2003 to 1,660 in April 2004. The number of individuals employed grew 1.4 percent from 38,230 in April 2003 to 38,760 in April 2004. Employment counts employed people who live within Bannock County; this does not necessarily mean they work in Bannock County. As a result, the improved employment numbers could be partially because workers have commuted outside Bannock County for jobs.

Nonfarm Payroll Jobs increased 1.5 percent (500) in April 2004 to 34,180. From March 2004 increases occurred in both the *Goods-Producing Industries*, which increased 1.5 percent (90), and the *Service-Providing Industries*, which increased 1.4 percent (410). Job increases over the month were typical seasonal changes. In the *Goods-Producing Industries*, *Manufacturing* increased by 3.2 percent (80). Jobs increased in *Other Manufacturing* and occurred throughout several business sectors.

In the *Service-Providing Industries*, *Trade, Transportation & Utilities* created 210 jobs because wholesale and retail began to stock seasonal supplies for building, landscaping, and gardening

Southeast Idaho Table 1: Labor Force & Employment
Pocatello City MSA (Bannock County)

	April 2004*	Mar 2004	April 2003	% Change From	
				Last Month	Last Year
INDIVIDUALS BY PLACE OF RESIDENCE					
<i>Seasonally Adjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	40,420	40,340	40,340	0.2	0.2
Unemployment	1,660	1,750	2,110	-5.1	-21.3
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.1	4.3	5.2		
Total Employment	38,760	38,590	38,230	0.4	1.4
<i>Unadjusted</i>					
Civilian Labor Force	41,110	41,220	41,000	-0.3	0.3
Unemployment	1,710	2,020	2,140	-15.3	-20.1
% of Labor Force Unemployed	4.2	4.9	5.2		
Total Employment	39,400	39,200	38,860	0.5	1.4
JOBS BY PLACE OF WORK					
Nonfarm Payroll Jobs** - NAICS	34,180	33,680	33,550	1.5	1.9
<i>Goods-Producing Industries</i>	4,110	4,020	4,170	2.2	-1.4
Natural Resources & Mining	10	10	10	0.0	0.0
Construction	1,500	1,490	1,620	0.7	-7.4
Manufacturing	2,600	2,520	2,540	3.2	2.4
Food Manufacturing	460	460	430	0.0	7.0
Fabricated Metal Product Manufacturing	120	120	110	0.0	9.1
Machinery Manufacturing	30	30	40	0.0	-25.0
Other Manufacturing	1,990	1,910	1,960	4.2	1.5
<i>Service-Providing Industries</i>	30,070	29,660	29,380	1.4	2.3
Trade, Transportation & Utilities	6,880	6,670	6,610	3.1	4.1
Wholesale Trade	1,110	1,030	1,020	7.8	8.8
Retail Trade	4,480	4,350	4,350	3.0	3.0
Utilities	40	50	40	-20.0	0.0
Transportation & Warehousing	1,250	1,240	1,200	0.8	4.2
Information	680	680	610	0.0	11.5
Financial Activities	1,830	1,820	1,920	0.5	-4.7
Professional & Business Services	3,730	3,570	3,770	4.5	-1.1
Educational & Health Services	2,760	2,740	2,790	0.7	-1.1
Leisure & Hospitality	3,240	3,270	3,370	-0.9	-3.9
Other Services	930	920	840	1.1	10.7
Government Education	5,750	5,760	5,520	-0.2	4.2
Government Administration	4,280	4,230	3,950	1.2	8.4

*Preliminary Estimate

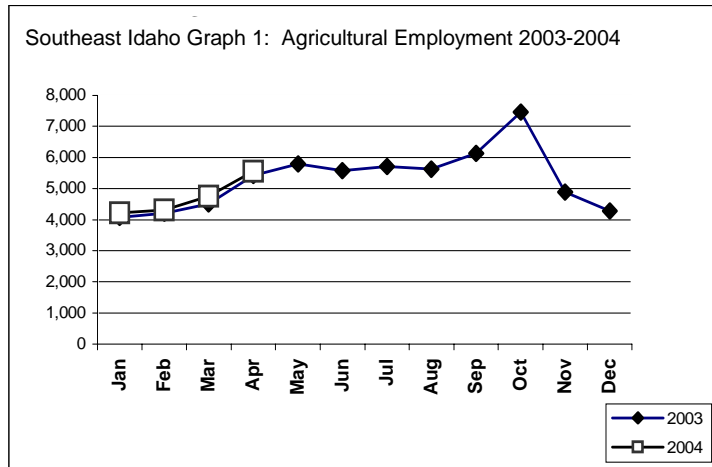
**Full- or part-time jobs of people who worked for or received wages in the pay period including the 12th of the month

activities. *Professional & Business Services* increased by 160 jobs as employers increased temporary staffing for the busy spring and summer season and accounting firms added staff for the busy tax preparation season. *Government Administration* added 50 jobs as seasonal hiring for parks, recreation programs, and road construction occurred. *Leisure & Hospitality* lost 30 jobs as winter recreational activities ceased. From April 2003 *Nonfarm Payroll Jobs* increased by 630, a good indicator that the economy is strengthening although April's warm weather might be a factor in year-over-year comparisons. Another good sign of a strengthening economy is increased activity in *Manufacturing*, which gained 60 jobs over the year. Gains were widespread and occurred in

Foods, Fabricated Metals, and Other Manufacturing. Government Administration showed an increase of 330 jobs over the year, but the additional jobs moved from private health services to the public sector when the two Pocatello hospitals merged. Without the reporting change of those private sector jobs, *Government Administration* would show a job reduction over the year.

SPECIAL TOPIC: Area Agriculture

The demand for agricultural workers in Southeast Idaho typically begins to build in March and then jumps to its highest month-over-month increase in April. Demand remains steady during the summer months then begins to build again in September with another large jump in October for harvest. Mild weather allowed agricultural activities to begin earlier in 2004 than in 2003. The number of agricultural workers increased an estimated 10.1 percent to 4,748 in March 2004, compared to a 6.9 percent increase to 4,500 one year earlier in March 2003; that number increased an estimated 16.9 percent to 5,551 in April 2004 compared to 20.6 percent to 5,425 one year earlier in April 2003. Southeast Idaho Graph 1: Agricultural Employment, charts estimated monthly employment in Southeast Idaho in 2003 and the first four months of 2004.



Unfortunately, crops that are planted early are sometimes damaged by May winds and late frosts. This year, winds damaged approximately 2,000 acres of sugar beets in Power County. Much of the crop has been replanted, but some acreage was planted in wheat, a short-season crop, to avoid problems late in the season with short water supplies.

AREA ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENTS

Please note: Information contained in Economic Developments is obtained from area newspapers, local Job Service offices, trade publications, local area Chambers of Commerce

publications, and other sources.

Bannock County

- Throughout the summer of 2004, the Idaho Transportation Department will work on a road construction project on Fourth and Fifth Avenues in Pocatello. The \$4 million project will include laying fiber optics to connect signal lights throughout Pocatello and allow the addition of video detection equipment for improved traffic flow. The project will be done in three-block sections, and work will be done at night to avoid daytime traffic interruptions.
- A new business, Child Behavior Center, opened in Pocatello. The business opened at Center Street's 151 building in Pocatello and will remain there until its new facility on Hospital Way is built. The new \$1 million, 11,000-square-foot facility should be completed by the end of the year. The business will bring approximately 50 jobs to Pocatello and will offer mental health services to youth.
- Ireland Bank has opened a second facility in Pocatello. The new bank location is at 486 Yellowstone Avenue.

Bear Lake County

- The Home Realty Network/Preston has opened a branch office at 358 Washington in Montpelier. Four real estate agents have joined the new business. Owner, Ryan Olsen, plans to expand the business to other cities in Southeast Idaho.

Bingham County

- The new Firth Town Square Business Park installed a new sign to identify its tenants. The Firth Medical Center, Potelco United Credit Union, Optometrist, Dr. Alona King, The City of Firth, and Boyd Petersen Law Office occupy the business park building. Bids were received, and work should begin soon to pave the facility's rear parking lot.

Power County

- A gift shop opened at Harms Memorial Hospital. Community donations and work donated by the hospital's women's auxiliary/volunteers made opening of the gift shop possible. All proceeds will be used on volunteer projects or donated back to the hospital for improvements.

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